

Network for a Healthy California
2007 Children and Youth Rebrand Focus Groups
Executive Summary

Background and Objectives

This report presents findings from focus group research conducted by Field Research Corporation (Field) for the *Network for a Healthy California's* new brand identity and the Produce for Better Health Foundation's new national brand, which replaced the *5 a Day* concept that has been in use for a number of years. The new national brand reflects the recent shift in Federal dietary recommendations away from a simple number-of-servings recommendation to one tied to each individual's gender, age, and level of physical activity.

The main purpose of the research was to test brand identity concepts and other materials prepared for use in upcoming promotional efforts targeted to low-income children and youth. The materials consisted of (1) a series of three text treatments for the *Children's Power Play! Campaign*; (2) the recently launched *Fruits & Veggies—More Matters!* brand logo; (3) the *Champions for Change* identity recently developed for the *Network for a Healthy California*; and (4) *Harvest of the Month* promotional materials. In addition, data were collected on communication sources and channels relevant for reaching youth audiences. The specific objectives of this project were:

- To assess audience reactions to the new *Network for a Healthy California Champions for Change* identity, the *Fruits & Veggies More Matters!* logo, and some new text treatments for the *Children's Power Play! Campaign*;
- To explore the relevance and appeal of environmental change activities among young people;
- To elicit audience reactions and preferences with regard to the design of new *Harvest of the Month* posters; and
- To identify social marketing communication channels appropriate for targeting 13- to 14-year-old youth.

Network for a Healthy California
2007 Children and Youth Rebrand Focus Groups
Executive Summary

Methodology

Twelve focus group interviews were completed with low-income boys and girls. The interviews were conducted in Oakland/Berkeley, Fresno, and Los Angeles during the weeks of March 19 and 26, 2007. Groups were segmented by gender and age such that four group interviews were conducted in each city, one with each of the following four audience segments: 9- to 11-year-old boys, 9- to 11-year-old girls, 13- to 14-year-old boys, and 13- to 14-year-old girls. With the exception of one group that had only five children, the groups consisted of six respondents. In total, 71 children were interviewed for the study. All were recruited from various ethnic backgrounds and were from low-income (<185% of Federal Poverty Level) families.

Major Findings & Recommendations

The New Champions for Change Brand Identity

Study data suggest that the new identity will have little appeal to low-income children and youth. While some may like the colorful logo, the concept of a “champion for change” was a difficult one for them to grasp. They tended to view a champion as a “winner” or “the best.” Respondents also reported seeing no link between the two phrases “*Champions for Change*” and “*Network for a Healthy California*.” When respondents were provided with more explanation and context, they had an easier time grasping the ideas but still did not find them very appealing or personally relevant. In addition, when asked to discuss the idea of championing change in their schools, some of the children expressed interest but their level of engagement and enthusiasm was rather low. Many of the respondents viewed a champion as a leader or as someone trying to make some type of positive change in their life. But, this was only after some time had been spent focusing on the concept. In light of these findings, use of the *Champions for Change* logo should be de-emphasized on materials for children since it will add little extra value.

The *Network* should think about approaching environmental change activities from a youth leadership development perspective where motivated young people are supported to take on projects that can both lead to environmental change and impart the development of leadership skills. While this may not have mass appeal, it will likely have strong appeal to some young

Network for a Healthy California
2007 Children and Youth Rebrand Focus Groups
Executive Summary

people. With this smaller group leading the way, the power of role modeling within peer groups might motivate other kids to make behavior changes and participate to at least some degree.

The Power Play! Text Treatments

The 9- to 11-year-old respondents reacted very favorably to the *Children's Power Play! Campaign* text treatments that were tested. Three different treatments were tested and for the sake of clarity among the moderator and respondents, the treatments were differentiated by the words "white play," "orange play," and "squeezed play" (see Appendix A). The "squeezed play" design was the most appealing across the groups interviewed, though many remarked that it looked a bit "old fashioned." There were gender differences noted, with the boys preferring "squeezed play" and "white play" for their "strong" and "boyish" look, and many of the girls favoring "orange play" because of the "big letters" and "fun" appearance. Overall, many respondents said that they would be interested in learning more about the *Children's Power Play! Campaign*. As a result of the data, the *Campaign* will create additional treatments based on the characteristics that appealed to the 9- to 11-year-old respondents.

The Harvest of the Month Posters

Several elements of the *Harvest of the Month* posters were tested including the mosaic design, the headlines, and athletic activities. The mosaic poster design tested very well in the groups. While some thought the posters looked "fuzzy" and "blurry," almost all were intrigued and asked for a closer look so they could see the small images of the fruits and vegetables. Respondents generally agreed that the posters would grab their attention if they saw them posted in public. We recommend that the background activity images be sharpened in terms of their clarity. When asked which of the two posters the respondents preferred, the majority of the younger and older girls preferred the soccer player while the majority of the boys chose the basketball player. It is unclear whether their preferences are due to the perceived gender of the athlete depicted or of the sport itself. Therefore, we recommend use of as many and varied activities as possible since children in these age groups will be most attracted to images depicting their own favorite activities. The headline "*Play Hard, Live Healthy!*" tested very well as did "*You Have the Power to Eat Healthy and Be Active!*" Many of the most popular headlines included the word "power," indicating that it is a concept with a strong and broad appeal for both boys and girls in these age groups.

Network for a Healthy California
2007 Children and Youth Rebrand Focus Groups
Executive Summary

Fruits & Veggies—More Matters!

Respondents reacted favorably to the new *Fruits & Veggies—More Matters!* brand, especially the younger children. It successfully and clearly communicates the idea that eating more fruits and vegetables matters. Respondents liked the “cool” colors that “pop out” and the big letters. When describing this logo, the respondents often compared it to *Champions for Change*, saying that *Fruit & Veggies—More Matters!* did a better job of imparting its main message. In addition, some respondents thought *Fruit & Veggies—More Matters!* was especially effective because it incorporated the slogan with fruits and vegetables and a human figure, saying that “it shows people are involved in the program.” The data suggest that it will work well in communications products targeted to children. The only exception was older girls, who found it more appropriate “for kids” and too “school-ish.”

Reaching the 13- to-14-Year-Old Audience

Almost across the board, the teen girls in the study found the materials unappealing. They tended to equate the materials with younger kids or with school, two associations viewed negatively. They also tended to find the *Harvest of the Month* posters “boring” while most of the other respondents found them attractive and appealing. To effectively reach the two audiences, the *Network* will need to employ different strategies for promotional efforts such as different content (*e.g.*, messages and images) as well as different channels (*e.g.*, teen and adult identified media outlets). The respondents also discussed where, and from whom, they learn about healthy eating and physical activity. The purpose for doing so was to assess appropriate social marketing channels. Across all the older groups, respondents agreed that television (*e.g.*, the Food Network, television commercials generally), magazines (*e.g.*, *Seventeen*, *Essence*, various food magazines, *Self*, *Sports Illustrated*), teachers (*e.g.*, garden teacher, nurse), coaches and parents were their main sources of health information. A few also noted they had learned important information from health fairs and nutrition classes in which they had participated. Respondents tended to agree that parents, doctors and athletes were the most trusted sources. When asked for other sources they would be comfortable with, many pointed to www.myspace.com, the popular online social networking site. Many also mentioned the power of celebrities and famous athletes. There were some gender differences in these responses. Boys were more likely than girls to point to

Network for a Healthy California
2007 Children and Youth Rebrand Focus Groups
Executive Summary

athletes as a preferred information source. The older girls were more likely than the older boys to point to teen and adult magazines rather than children's magazines.

New Directions for Upcoming Promotional Efforts

Study data suggest that children in both age groups may be interested in cooking demonstrations, presentations, dance-a-thons, jog-a-thons, bake sales and other activities that are fun, interactive and appropriate for kids. These activities might have individual level behavior change as an objective but could perhaps also incorporate environmental change messages. Older children in the study expressed some interest in teaching younger children, so consideration should be given to structuring the activities in this way. Other strategies suggested by respondents include greater use of school cafeterias as message dissemination points, more attention to the Internet, and greater use of athletes and celebrities who have particular appeal to these age groups.

Network for a Healthy California
2007 Children and Youth Rebrand Focus Groups
Executive Summary

APPENDIX A
Children's Power Play! Campaign
Text Treatment Summary

The *Children's Power Play! Campaign* tested the three text treatments below. The treatments were differentiated by the words "squeezed play," "white play," and "orange play."



"Squeezed Play"



"White Play"



"Orange Play"

Overall the children liked the "squeezed play" treatment the best. However, their comments included things like old-fashioned, been done before, and plain. A few respondents had suggestions for improving the text treatment. Below are some of the ideas discussed.

- Words should be outlined
- Add a design around the words
- Add a picture
- Use 3D effects
- The word "Power" should stand out
- Use bigger letters

Based on the suggestions and characteristics described above, the *Campaign* will create new treatments and field test them with children from various regions throughout the state.